

Iowa Outdoors
Iowa Department of Natural Resources
www.iowadnr.com

Editor: Mick Klemesrud, 515/281-8653
mick.klemesrud@dnr.state.ia.us

May 25, 2004

1. Heavy Rain Affects Parks this Memorial Day Weekend
2. High Water Could Pose Problems for Holiday Boaters
3. Trout, Northeast Flooding Update
4. Fishing Clinic Season – by Joe Wilkinson
5. Leave Wildlife Babies Where they Belong --- In the Wild – by Lowell Washburn
[electronic photo available]
6. Iowa Fishing Report

HEAVY RAIN AFFECTS PARKS THIS MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND

DES MOINES – Memorial Day Weekend is a busy camping weekend, and with the recent heavy rains campers are advised to call ahead to check on conditions at the parks. Less rain is forecasted for the remainder of the week, so conditions are expected to improve. However, there are many parks where camping and other recreation activities have been affected.

Some campgrounds were evacuated last weekend due to road closings. Bob Schierbaum, district supervisor for parks in southwest Iowa, said at Springbrook State Park, half of the campers decided to wait out the storm. “Those that stayed had access across the creek via a 4X4 loader tractor ferry service. The creek was back in its banks by Monday morning.”

Park staff is working on clean up and most parks will be ready for the holiday weekend.

“Campers can expect to see some flood damage and muddy grounds at Backbone, but clean-up is in full swing and we expect to have the roads and both campgrounds open by Friday,” said Jerry Reisinger, the northeast district supervisor.

Many central Iowa parks continue to be affected. George Wyth and Walnut Woods remain flooded. At Brushy Creek, trails are closed and boat docks are under water. Ledges has seen a temporary closing of the canyon road. Other Iowa parks like

Beeds Lake, Wapsipinicon and Volga River may be of concern unless drier conditions prevail. The boat ramp at Elk Rock is now closed. A posting of Memorial Day weekend weather related updates will be available on the state parks web site at www.exploreiowaparks.com on the construction and temporary closures link.

Many parks remain open for camping and other activities but could have limited access. “If there is a road closing, chances are that you can access the park from a different route,” said Heather Cline with the DNR’s state parks bureau. “We can’t stress enough the importance of calling ahead. It is especially important to get condition reports if you plan on boating or equestrian activities.”

For safety reasons, park users are reminded to avoid places where there is water over the road or washed out trail areas, and always be respectful of barricades.

There are many parks that have not seen any flooding. Some of these include Maquoketa Caves, Bellevue, Prairie Rose, Lake Ahquabi, Viking Lake, Clear Lake, Gull Point and Black Hawk. Pine Lake has not had flooding problems; the park is open but the campground remains closed due to construction.

###

HIGH WATER COULD POSE PROBLEMS FOR HOLIDAY BOATERS

DES MOINES – Many lakes and streams across Iowa are bursting with water from what seems like daily rainstorms. As the Memorial Day weekend approaches, boaters who are planning to be on the water are encouraged to use extreme caution.

“The heavy rains and rising water levels can really change the complexion of a reservoir or river creating new hazards and hiding old ones,” said Lon Lindenberg, law enforcement supervisor with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. “Boaters really need to be on the lookout for the new debris and the best way to do that is to slow down.”

For some boaters, the Memorial Day weekend is the first time the boat will be on the water. Lindenberg said it would be a good idea to give the boat a good examination to make sure all the safety equipment is on board and that the boat and trailer is ready for the season.

“Sitting on the boat ramp is not the best place to learn that the lights don’t work or that the lifejackets are in the garage,” he said. “If we have good weather, the ramps will be busy.”

Because of the anticipated heavy boat traffic, it would be wise to freshen up on the boating safety tips and to have patience. Boaters should also keep an eye on the sky

and pay attention to weather reports. Most of the recent storms have started during the late afternoon.

“Don’t wait until the weather turns bad before getting off the water. Having all the boaters at the ramp at once can make a bad situation worse,” Lindenberg said.

###

TROUT, NORTHEAST FLOODING UPDATE

Churning floodwaters across northeast Iowa curtailed trout stocking for a few days. The three trout hatcheries expect to resume stocking by Memorial Day Weekend.

“We will be checking some of the streams through mid-week, but plan to resume normal stocking by about Thursday on almost all our streams,” notes Dave Marolf, Department of Natural Resources hatchery manager at Manchester.

More than eight inches of rain fell over two days in some watersheds. The Big Springs hatchery, along the banks of the Turkey River was threatened by rising water, but escaped being flooded.

“When the river crested early Sunday morning, it was nearly 20 feet above normal, one inch from the top of the levee,” reports Gary Siegwarth, manager at the Big Springs station. About 200,000 trout are held at Big Springs. Some trout were washed from the raceways to the nearby pond, but should be recovered. Following severe flooding in the 1990s, that levee was built up another two feet. “There is no doubt that saved us this time,” emphasizes Marolf.

Resumption of trout stocking will hinge on water levels of the 50-plus streams and access to them. Marolf says fish already in the streams should fare well, despite the volume of water pushing through the small streams. “Fish that are acclimated to the streams are have a home area that is safe. By and large, they hold in that habitat and those eddies as the flood waters go over the top.”

###

FISHING CLINIC SEASON

By Joe Wilkinson

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

Outstretched hands wait their turn, to check out the slimy coating and prickly dorsal fin of a wriggling white bass. “Can you see how it uses those spines to ward off danger,” queries fisheries technician Jon Christensen, as the 9- inch fish flares the spiked fin, in response to the tight situation it is facing.

That situation involved going gill to nose with mud-soaked high school students, during a fish identification clinic. The bass was a ‘teaching aid,’ among more than a dozen fish species trucked to the outdoor day on Muscatine’s riverfront. The students--muddy from their morning cleanup of a nearby creek--took turns asking questions about the fish and relaying their own fish stories. With the Mississippi River behind them, their afternoon session would rotate from fish I-D, to recycling, water quality and chainsaw safety.

“We have a variety of fish species here. It’s basic fish identification,” explains Christensen, fisheries technician from the DNR’s nearby Fairport fisheries station. “With the Mississippi River, you are going to have a lot of species you might not see inland, such as on a lake.”

Scenes like it will be repeated hundreds of times in the next few weeks. Fishing clinics, environmental fairs, outdoor days...there are various names for the sessions. Some go all day. Some last just an hour. The idea, though, is to instill an appreciation of the outdoors that will last for decades.

“We want them to realize ‘what is out there,’ to create some life long habits,” explains Dave Tometich; one of the teachers riding herd on the 60 students who took part in the creek cleanup and environmental sessions. This was the first year for the Muscatine effort, underwritten by a Farm Bureau grant. Other sessions are funded by various profit or nonprofit entities, relying on help from the DNR, county conservation departments, environmental clubs and other presenters.

Some are for class credit and progress from classroom to outdoor settings. Others, like basic fishing clinics, are strictly for recreation. Click your way to fish clinics on the DNR website (www.iowadnr.com) and you’ll find more than 100 listed....30 on June 5 alone! That’s the middle of Iowa’s free fishing weekend, and the most popular day to get newcomers out to the water.

The Johnson County Conservation Department is in that June 5 crowd. Fishing basics will be outlined at F.W. Kent Park near Tiffin, at the lake’s boat ramp, from 1 to 3 p.m.

“We want to reach people who are not our ‘regular’ anglers,” says Brad Friedhof, naturalist for the county. “They might be single parent households, with no one to teach fishing...or just a newcomer who wants to give it a try.” About 40 to 50 poles will be available for loan that afternoon.

That clinic will cover basic questions, such as the common Kent Park lake fish species and how to catch them. That includes ‘thinking small.’ “Smaller sized hooks, small split shot to sink them down to the fish,” says Friedhof. “We do encourage use of bobbers; so beginning anglers can sense when the fish are active; when that bobber starts moving. We suggest simple fishing gear; maybe six to ten pound test line, too.”

Down the road in Muscatine, the kids weren’t doing any fishing—that day. But they would put the lessons to use. The physical characteristics of each fish were highlighted; and how they come into play. “These little eyes mean these (flathead catfish) are not going to be sight feeders,” points out Christensen. “They use these whiskers or barbels to ‘smell’ their food.” On the other hand, he noted the relatively large eyes on the bass, and how the bucket-sized mouth would eat just about anything it could wrap that mouth around. The freshwater drum, with its shell-crunching type ‘molars’ could grind up crayfish and mollusks.

“I found out how to identify the different catfish,” pointed out Christine Kuster. “And the walleye and sauger; bluegills and green sunfish. It’s kind of hard to identify fish because a lot of them look a lot alike. I think this will help. I’ve probably mistaken a lot of them in my time.” So, armed with some more information, she was ready to dive into a summer of fishing.

“I fish all the time; with my grandparents usually. Sometimes we go up to the north woods and fish with the whole family,” recalls Kuster. “It’s a tradition.”

Fish Free in June

Iowa’s free fishing days are June 4-6. Fishing license requirements are waived in Iowa, for Iowa residents. The annual ‘fish free’ weekend is designed for new anglers, or those who haven’t fished for years to pick up the sport again. Other requirements, such as possession limits and minimum length requirements are still in effect.

Many outdoor groups and conservation agencies tie into the weekend, with fishing clinics and other outdoor classroom activities. More than 50 are listed on the DNR’s website, by clicking on ‘2004 Fishing Clinics’, under Reminders/News. That is also where you can find the DNR’s fishing report, updated weekly.

###

LEAVE WILDLIFE BABIES WHERE THEY BELONG --- IN THE WILD

By Lowell Washburn

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

CLEAR LAKE---It's as predictable as August heat. From border to border, the Wildlife Baby Season has arrived in Iowa. From late May until at least mid-June, DNR field offices across the state will be inundated with hundreds of phone calls and scores of deliveries regarding "orphaned wildlife".

Most calls begin with something like, "We were walking in the park when . . .," or "I looked out my window and saw. . ." In nearly every instance, the scenario ends with something [or several somethings] being rescued from their mother.

During a typical season, the species will range all the way from baby robins to spindly-legged white-tailed fawns. At this time of the year it is not at all uncommon for biologists to discover that complete litters of baby raccoons, foxes, or even skunks have mysteriously appeared on their doorsteps.

Why this happens is no real mystery. From fuzzy yellow ducklings to tiny baby bunnies, nothing appears more cute and cuddly than a wildlife baby. But in reality, most of the wildlife reported to DNR field offices is not really orphaned at all. And while the people who attempt to "rescue" these babies have the best of intentions, they are in fact dooming the very creatures they intend to help.

The babies of most wildlife species leave their nests or dens well in advance of being able to care for themselves. Although broods or litters may become widely scattered during this fledgling period, they still remain under the direct care and feeding of their parents.

For many songbirds, the transition to independence comes quickly and may take as little as four or five days. For other species such as Canada geese, kestrels, or great horned owls, the young and parents may stay in contact for weeks -- even months.

At the beginning of the fledgling period, young birds appear clumsy, dull-witted, and vulnerable. The reason is because they really are clumsy, dull-witted, and vulnerable. But as the education process continues, the survivors smarten up fast while slow learners quickly fade from the scene. Most birds have less than a 20 percent chance of surviving their first year. Cruel, yes. But this isn't cable TV. In the real out-of-doors, it's just the way things are.

Most mammals employ a slightly different strategy when it comes to caring for their adolescents. Since most mammals are largely nocturnal, the mother usually finds a safe daytime hideout for her young while she sleeps or looks for food. Consequently, it is perfectly normal for the young to be alone or unattended during the daylight hours.

Nevertheless, whenever a newborn fawn or a nest full of baby cottontails or raccoons is discovered by a human, it is universally assumed that the animals are orphaned. The youngster's fate is usually sealed as it is promptly "rescued from the wild."

Many wildlife babies die soon after capture from the stress of being handled, talked to, and placed into the unfamiliar surroundings of a slick sided cardboard box. Should the animal have the misfortune of surviving this trauma, they often succumb more slowly to pneumonia, a host of other diseases, or undernourishment.

Whether they are adults or young, all species of wildlife have highly specific needs for survival. "Rescuing a baby from its mother" not only shows bad judgment it is also highly illegal.

Observing wildlife in its natural habitat is always a unique privilege. Taking a good photo or two provides an even more lasting memory. But once you've done that, let well enough alone. Leave baby wildlife where it belongs -- in the wild.

###

IOWA FISHING REPORT

For the week of May 25, 2004

www.iowadnr.com

For current information on fishing conditions for your lake or area, contact the office in that district. Phone numbers are listed with each district report.

Southeast

Mississippi River Pools 16 to 19: Fishing on the Mississippi River has been fair. The water temperature at Muscatine is 69 degrees and the river stage is 8.6 and is expected to rise steadily the next few days from the recent rains. Fishing conditions will be difficult with water levels approaching near flood levels. Prior to the recent rains, anglers were catching good numbers of white bass on all pools in the tailwaters and mouth of creeks on spinners, jigs and minnows. Fishing has been slow for walleye and sauger. Bluegill and crappie fishing has been fair in the backwater areas on jigs tipped with worms, wax worms and minnows. Crappie fishing has been fair in Lake Odessa on Pool 18. Fishing continues to be good for channel catfish on all pools on shad, night crawlers, stink bait and minnows.

Lake Odessa (Louisa): The water continues to drop slowly for the summer drawdown. Some nice bluegills are being caught in some of the smaller backwaters on worm and bobber.

Lake Darling (Washington): The weekend rains did not muddy up the lake too badly. Crappie fishing is sporadic at best but the bluegill fishing is picking up as the fish are moving in to nest. Use a worm and bobber or jig tipped with worm for some nice 7 to 7-1/2-inch fish. Catfishing is also picking up as the water warms up and the catfish come into the shallows to feed on crappies and bluegills. Chicken liver has been the favorite bait. **There will be road construction going on in the park, but the main boat ramp will still be open.**

Lake Geode (Henry): Bluegill fishing has been fair to good depending on the weather. The males are on the beds so concentrate on the shallow bays and shorelines. The bass are also in shallow with a few anglers reporting a few on the spawning beds. Crankbaits worked along the edges should provide some nice action.

Lake Belva Deer (Keokuk): Bluegill fishing has been excellent. The big ones have moved onto the beds and away from the deeper water in the trees. Slowly working a jig and worm or a worm and bobber in the shallow water will yield some nice 9 to 10-inch fish. Anglers are catching good numbers of the 10 to 12-inch bass and there are also some legal 15-inch fish being caught. Try fishing plastic worms around the flooded timber for the bass.

Lake Rathbun (Appanoose): Crappies are biting on small jigs or minnows fished in 4 to 6 feet of water. Look for areas with rock or other structure to hold fish.

Lake Sugema (Van Buren): Crappies have started biting on small jigs. Largemouth bass have been hitting on artificial lures. Walleyes have been hitting jigs in the evenings.

Lake Miami (Monroe): Bluegills and crappies have been hitting on small jigs fished in shallow water. Channel catfish have been biting on night crawlers.

Lake Hawthorn (Monroe): Crappies have been hitting on small jigs and minnows. Largemouth bass have been biting on artificial lures.

Lake Macbride (Johnson): Crappie fishing has been good around structure in 6 to 10 feet of water. Most of the crappies are between 8 and 10 inches. Small jigs or minnows fished around the brush or rock is working well. Shoreline fishing has been good along the causeway and off the fishing jetties. Some walleye are being caught and the largemouth bass fishing has been good. Some catfish can be caught in the evening in the shallow bays on dead shad. Bluegills are in spawning, but most fish area between 5 and 7 inches.

Coralville Reservoir (Johnson): The reservoir is coming up and getting muddy. A few catfish can be caught on shad in the mouths of creeks.

Pleasant Creek (Linn): Largemouth bass fishing has been good for 14 to 16-inch fish. Pleasant Creek has an 18-inch size limit on largemouth bass. Bluegill fishing has been good on small jigs and worms. The fish are spawning in the shallow bays and most range from 6 to 8 inches. A few walleye are being caught in the evenings on slip bobbers and leeches.

Lake Iowa (Iowa): Crappie fishing has been good around the brush piles on small jigs or minnows. Bluegills are spawning and can be caught in the shallow bays on worms or small jigs.

Kent Park Lake (Johnson): Catfish have been biting in the evening. Bluegills can be caught in the shallows on small jigs or small pieces of worm.

Diamond Lake (Poweshiek): Crappie fishing is fair around the deeper brush piles on jigs. Bluegills can be caught off the beds in the shallow bays. Some catfish can be caught in the evenings.

For more information on fishing in southeast Iowa, call the regional office in Brighton at 319-694-2430.

Northeast

Mississippi River Pools 9 to 15: The Mississippi River is extremely turbid with floating debris. The gates are out at both **Lock and Dam 9 and 10** and water levels continue to rise. Water levels are near flood conditions in Guttenberg and temperature is near 64 degrees. Turbid water conditions offer a challenge to river anglers. If planning a trip to **Pools 9 through 11**, it may be best to avoid the extremely turbid waters at the confluence of Iowa and Wisconsin tributary streams. For instance, the Turkey River is at flood stage and water is very muddy. This week, you may consider avoiding the Mississippi River below Millville and lower **Pool 11**. Other spots to avoid may be immediately below the Wisconsin River near McGregor and immediately downstream of the Upper Iowa River near New Albin in **Pool 9**. Freshwater drum, carp and catfish, three species of fish that go on strong feeding patterns during high turbid water, are biting. These species exploit the new food sources being washed into the river. The best methods to catch these fish are using night crawlers or prepared scent baits in freshly flooded areas. These species are all strong fighters and can be good eating fish if prepared correctly. They can turn normally unpleasant fishing conditions into a fun and productive angling day. River stage at Bellevue is 13.7 feet and projected to rise another

2-1/2 feet by mid-week. The water temperature is 68 degrees. Spring Lake and the upper portion of Brown's Lake in **Pool 13** are good for bluegill and crappie. Channel catfish are hitting night crawlers fished in **Pool 12-15**.

The rivers in northeast Iowa are high and muddy. Channel catfish are biting in flooded areas using night crawlers fished from the banks. NEVER boat on a flooded river.

Volga Lake (Fayette): Crappie fishing is good on small jigs. Bluegills are hitting a piece of night crawler or worm fished under a bobber.

Lake Hendricks (Howard): Bluegill and crappie fishing is good on worms or small jigs.

Lake Meyer (Winnebago): Bluegills in the 6 to 7-inch range are hitting worms. Crappies are good on small jigs.

South Prairie (Black Hawk): Crappie fishing is good on a jig and minnow.

Casey Lake (Tama) in Hickory Hills Park is good for 8-inch bluegills on jigs and night crawlers fished next to brush piles and structure. Largemouth bass are being picked up with a variety of lures (crankbaits, rubber worms and spinner baits).

Trout stream conditions are highly variable. Decorah and Manchester hatcheries hope to stock every area prior to the Memorial Day weekend; however, actual stocking is dependent upon stream conditions. Big Springs Hatchery will not stock trout this week. For current trout stocking information on other northeast Iowa trout streams, call the trout stocking hotline at 563-927-5736. You can also access the trout stocking calendar through the internet at www.iowadnr.com and go to the fish and fishing web pages.

For information on fishing in northeast Iowa, call the regional office in Manchester at 563-927-3276.

Northwest

Spirit Lake (Dickinson): Walleye fishing is good. Anglers are sorting through a lot of sub-legal walleyes to catch keepers. Smallmouth bass fishing is excellent at Red Nose, Big Stoney Point, Little Stoney Point and Cottonwood. Use crankbaits or tubes. Crappie fishing continues to be outstanding in Hales Slough and at the north end of Anglers Bay using small jigs and minnows. Largemouth bass fishing is excellent in the bulrushes and around docks using soft plastics. Bullhead fishing is good at the North Grade.

East Okoboji (Dickinson): Anglers are catching good numbers of crappies below the overhanging brush and along rocky shorelines. Fish close to shore as many fish are relating to this structure. White bass are being caught near docks and shoreline structure.

West Okoboji (Dickinson): Anglers are catching some walleyes during the day. Look for clumps of weeds in 14 to 18 feet of water. Live bait rigs with minnows, leeches or night crawlers under slip bobbers will produce fish. Fish slowly. The night bite is best from 11 p.m. to 4 a.m. Long line trolling crankbaits will produce best. The panfish action is consistent. Fish the Harbor, Triboji or the canals on Miller's Bay. Northern pike action is good using a jig and minnow. Smallmouth bass fishing is good on the rock piles. Use small grubs or tubes tipped with a minnow.

Lost Island (Palo Alto): Shore anglers continue to have good walleye fishing during the evening. Anglers are also catching some crappies.

Silver Lake (Dickinson): Fishing is excellent for 13 to 18-inch walleyes.

Lake Pahoja (Lyon): Fishing is excellent for nice sized channel catfish. Use traditional catfish baits.

Black Hawk Lake (Sac): Walleye fishing is fair to good using jigs tipped with leeches under a bobber. Many walleyes are under the 15-inch minimum length limit. Bullhead fishing is excellent. Anglers are catching a few crappies in Town Bay.

Storm Lake (Buena Vista): Walleye fishing is fair. Channel catfish are good on shad entrails.

Brushy Creek (Webster): Bluegills and crappies moved into the bays. Crappies are taking minnows and the bluegills are hitting wax worms. Bass are spawning, but the constantly changing water temperature has not helped the anglers. Use leeches or minnows for walleyes. A few anglers are catching walleyes on crankbaits.

Clear Lake (Cerro Gordo): Walleye fishing is good. Live bait and jigs or trolling crankbaits are producing walleyes. Remember the 14-inch minimum length limit. Yellow bass fishing is good around Dodge's Point, the Island and the outlet. Use small jigs and minnows casting into the shoreline. Bullhead fishing is good using night crawlers on the bottom at sunset and into the early evening.

Beeds Lake (Franklin): Anglers are catching crappies on small jigs and minnows either by drifting or fishing from the jetties. Most of the crappies are between 7 and 9 inches.

Upper Pine – Lower Pine (Hardin): Crappie fishing is good using minnows and small jigs around the downed trees.

Rice Lake (Worth/Winnebago): Bullhead fishing is good using night crawlers on the windy shorelines.

Silver Lake (Worth): Bullhead fishing is good using night crawlers. Yellow perch are being caught on minnows off the fishing jetty.

For more information on fishing in northwest Iowa, call the regional office in Spirit Lake at 712-336-1840.

Southwest

Three Mile (Union): Channel catfish are being caught with night crawlers, dip baits or liver. Crappies are biting in 8 to 10 feet of water. Bluegills are moving into the shallow areas in the early morning and late evening and biting on small jigs and small worms. Largemouth bass fishing is good all over the lake.

Twelve Mile (Union): Fishing for channel catfish is good using night crawlers or liver. Some walleye are being caught around the larger points.

Icaria (Adams): Fishing is good for catfish using night crawlers and liver. Some walleye are being caught trolling the dam and the big points.

Green Valley (Union): Crappies are starting to move over the deep rocks early and late in the day. Some really big bluegill can be caught in the shallows with night crawlers. Channel catfish can be caught in the bays on night crawlers.

Little River (Decatur): Crappies, 9 inches and larger, are biting in the shallow rocky areas during the early morning and late afternoon. Catfish can be caught in the bays using liver or night crawlers.

Slip Bluff (Decatur): Some bluegills and crappies are being caught during middle of the day. Fish the rocks off the dam for bluegills and crappies early and late in the day. Largemouth bass can be caught off the west shoreline structure.

West Lake Osceola (Clarke): Bluegill and largemouth bass fishing is excellent in the timbered coves and along the dam. Crappies are on the beds in the upper end of the lake.

Grade Lake (Clarke): Bluegills are biting well on night crawlers and small jigs in the corners of the dam and along the east shore.

Binder (Adams): Largemouth bass fishing is good along the dam.

Old Corning (Adams): Nice-sized bluegills and crappies are biting along the dam and the east side.

Fogle Lake (Ringgold): Crappies can be caught early in the morning and late evening in the rocks off the dam and jetties. Some bluegill can be caught off the west shore and in the west bay.

Walnut Creek Marsh (Ringgold): Bluegill and crappie can be caught along the south shore and around the jetties.

Wilson Lake (Taylor): Crappies can be caught off the rocks of the dam early and late in the day.

Windmill Lake (Taylor): Bluegills can be caught with night crawlers in the shallows.

Big Creek (Polk): Crappie fishing has been good using jigs with or without minnows. Bluegill fishing is picking up with the warmer weather with bluegill 8 inches or larger common. Walleye fishing has been good using live bait rigs and spinner rigs tipped with minnows or night crawlers, although most of the walleye are below the 15-inch minimum length limit.

Lake Ahquabi (Warren): Bluegill fishing has been good using jigs with worms. Some anglers are doing well using twister tails. Largemouth bass fishing has been good, with some fish caught with top-water lures. Crappie fishing has been slow. The best fishing is early morning and late afternoon.

Beaver Lake (Dallas): Bluegill fishing has been good on small jigs and worms. Largemouth bass fishing has been excellent, although most fish are below the legal size limit.

Hooper Lake (Warren): Bluegill fishing has been good using worms and jigs. Largemouth bass fishing has been fair to good.

Don Williams (Boone): Crappie fishing is excellent using minnows and jigs in shallow waters along the shoreline. Bluegill fishing is picking up with good success on smaller fish. Channel catfish fishing is good using night crawlers and cut baits toward the north end of the lake.

Rock Creek (Jasper): Crappie fishing is good using night crawlers or minnows and jigs. Channel catfish fishing is fair using night crawlers. Largemouth bass fishing has been good from shore and boat using jigs and casting lures. Walleye fishing has also been fair using jigs and minnows.

Red Rock (Marion): Crappie, usually 10 inches or larger, and white bass, have been hitting on jigs and minnows in the bays and coves. Channel catfish have been hitting in the bay and cove areas using night crawlers and worms.

Red Rock tailwater (Marion): Crappie and white bass fishing has been good using jigs and minnows. Some walleye and have also been reported.

Roberts Creek (Marion): Crappie fishing has been good using jigs with minnows and/or night crawlers. Channel catfish have been hitting on night crawlers.

Easter Lake (Polk): Fishing has been good for 8 to 9-inch crappies on jigs and minnows. A few walleyes have been caught while crappie fishing. Bluegill fishing has been good but most fish were small.

Des Moines River (Polk): White bass fishing has been good below dams. Some walleye have been caught using jigs below Scott Street Dam in Des Moines.

Saylorville Lake (Polk): White bass fishing has been good just below the outlet from Big Creek Lake. Crappie fishing has also been good in this area. Some anglers have reported good, but spotty, success on white bass in other parts of the lake using twister tails.

Saylorville Tailwater (Polk): White bass fishing has been excellent using twister tails, white and chartreuse glitter, and sonar. Channel catfish fishing has been good using cut baits (shad).

Viking (Montgomery): Crappie and bluegill fishing is good using tube jigs along shoreline and around structure. Channel catfish fishing is fair using night crawlers or liver. Largemouth bass fishing has picked up in the evening around structure.

Cold Springs (Cass): Fishing is good for 7 to 8-inch crappies using jigs and minnows around structure near shore.

Manawa (Pottawattamie): Fishing is excellent for channel catfish on Boy Scout Island. A few crappies are being caught in the lagoon. Walleyes are being caught on west shore along rocks.

Orient (Adair): Fishing is fair for 7-inch crappies using jigs and/or minnows along the dam, and the southeast shore near the water pump house. Anglers are also catching small bluegills.

Mormon Trail (Adair): Walleye fishing is good using crankbaits or jigs. Anglers are catching 7 to 9-inch crappies. Channel catfish are good using night crawlers or liver.

Prairie Rose (Shelby): Fishing is excellent for 7-inch crappies using jigs and minnows around rocks and woody structure. Bass fishing is good. Anglers are starting to catch channel catfish on liver. Fishing for small bluegills is good near shore.

DeSoto Bend (Harrison): Walleye and crappie fishing is fair. Walleyes being harvested are 15 to 16 inches. Anglers also are catching good numbers of largemouth bass. Carp are being caught near shore.

Southwest Iowa Farm Ponds: Bluegill, crappie and largemouth bass fishing is excellent. A lot of bluegill can be caught using night crawlers. Reminder: ask permission and clean up your trash when fishing on private land.

For more information on fishing in southwest Iowa, call the regional office in Lewis at 712-769-2587.

###